

CABINET	AGENDA ITEM No. 7
17 JUNE 2024	PUBLIC REPORT

Report of:	Cecilie Booth, Executive Director of Corporate Services and John Gregg, Executive Director of Children’s Services	
Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Councillor Amjad Iqbal, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Governance	
Contact Officer(s):	Felicity Paddick – Head of Estates & Facilities Management / Sam Nash – Senior Commissioning Manager	07801 910971 / 07714 645928

PURCHASE OF A PROPERTY FOR USE AS A HOME FOR CHILDREN

RECOMMENDATIONS	
FROM: <i>Head of Estates and Facilities Management</i>	Deadline date: <i>June 2024</i>
<p>It is recommended that Cabinet:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approves the acquisition of the property and associated works as detailed in the exempt annex. 2. That authority is delegated to the Executive Director of Corporate Services and Director of Legal and Governance, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Governance to take all necessary steps including agreeing final terms and final budget for works entering into all necessary agreements to facilitate the decision in Recommendation. 	

1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

1.1 This report is submitted to Cabinet due to the level of expenditure required to deliver the project.

2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

2.1 The purpose of this report is to approve the acquisition of a dwelling and associated works to provide a children’s home and initially to specifically support the needs of a minor with additional needs. Further details relating to the individuals’ needs are contained in the exempt annex.

2.2 This report is for Cabinet to consider under its Terms of Reference No. 3.2.4

To be responsible for budget planning, monitoring and expenditure/savings over £500,000, including Discretionary Rate Relief, with the exception of any time critical, operational, or routine decision, which may be determined by the relevant portfolio holder.

2.3 This report is NOT FOR PUBLICATION in accordance with paragraph (s) 1, 2 and 3 of Schedule 12A of Part 1 of the Local Government Act 1972 in that it contains information relating to the financial and business affairs of an individual or business and that it is likely to result in the individual being identified. The public interest test has been applied to the information contained within the exempt annex and it is considered that the need to retain the information as exempt outweighs the public interest in disclosing it.

3. TIMESCALES

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	NO	If yes, date for Cabinet meeting	N/A
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4. BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

4.1 In May 2022 Child X became a child in the care of Peterborough City Council. Child X displays highly complex behaviours and has had a significant number of placement disruptions and moves over the course of their period in care.

Child X's presenting behaviours are such that a considerable number of providers have issued notice on placements as a consequence of their inability to safely manage Child X's care and support needs.

Child X is currently subject to a Secure Welfare Order and planning for discharge requires an Ofsted registered bespoke provision, capable of meeting Child X's care and support needs.

Due to various complexities of the individual's needs and following the review of the Council's existing property portfolio to consider if any existing properties in the Council's ownership may suit Child X, it was determined that a property would need to be acquired to suit these needs. In particular, the property needed to be of sturdy construction to limit damage and located in a rural area, ideally with none or minimal neighbouring properties. Following a search, it was evident that there were limited options but a property has been identified within the local authority boundary. An offer has been submitted below the asking price and this has been accepted – details of the property and purchase price are included in the exempt annex. Please note that the property will need change of use under the Town and County Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (As Amended) from C3 (Dwellinghouses) to C2 (Residential Institution) and advice has been sought internally on this matter. If at a point in the future, the property is no longer required for Child X, the property can continue to be used as a children's home and support other individuals.

Due to the specialist requirement of the property being acquired, specific works are needed to enable the property to be used as a children's home and for the safety of the user and carers. Suggested floor plans for the conversion have already been prepared by a specialist contractor and these are contained in the exempt annex. Further details relating to the projecting costings for the conversion are also contained in the annex.

Children's commissioning will be undertaking an options appraisal to inform the most economically viable service delivery model; likely options include –

- call-off from an existing contract for the service delivery of the residential home with a provider (within the voluntary & charitable sector);
- a full procurement process for the service delivery of the residential home with a provider (within the voluntary & charitable sector); direct service delivery model led by the council.

5. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

5.1

1. *Our Places & Communities*
 - *Health and Wellbeing*
2. *Prevention, Independence & Resilience*
 - *Children*

Further information on the Council's Priorities can be found here - [Link to Corporate Strategy and Priorities Webpage](#)

6. CONSULTATION

- 6.1 This matter has been considered in detail between officers, at CSC SLT, CLT (28th May 2024) and CPF (3rd June 2024).

7. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OR IMPACT

- 7.1 The bespoke provision will be able to ensure Child X's care and support needs are sustainably met, giving Child X placement stability and an opportunity to engage in education and prepare for adulthood. The environment is designed to meet their individual presenting and ongoing need with a skilled staff team sustainably managing their behavioural requirements.

8. REASON FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

- 8.1 *The Council has a statutory responsibility to ensure that Children and young people in care are appropriately and suitably cared for. This recommendation will support the Council to meet this duty.*

[Compliance with statutory responsibilities as listed in section 20 of the Children Act 1989.](#)

9. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 9.1 Alternative options considered include the following –
- Commissioning a placement for Child X via the external market
 - Developing a partnership arrangement with an external provider (to be inclusive of property)

Both of these options are being explored currently for Child X, however, owing to historical information detailed within the Exempt Report, it is recommended that the Council proceed with this recommendation.

10. IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

- 10.1 *The financial implications are detailed on the Exempt Report.*

Legal Implications

- 10.2 Approval has already been given for expenditure in respect of the Council's statutory duties/responsibilities under section 20 of the Children Act 1989. Therefore, there is no specific legal implications.

Equalities Implications

- 10.3 *None*

11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

- 11.1 *None*

12. APPENDICES

- 12.1 *Exempt Appendix 1
Exempt Appendix 2*

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